2: Hutchinson E-4,5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
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794 1933 when two women took the scapular and cord. But nothing
747 more came of it. There is a benevolent organization, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which gives aid to the poor and is run by three men of Class B. It is very weak, however, and at present can help only four persons in the town. The society conducts no festivals or public displays.

Festivals

796 The festivals which take place in Vila Recôncavo are based
[184] on the religious calendar and are participated in to a great
[793] extent by the African cult members. January 1 is an important date in town and is celebrated by a Mass in the fishermen's chapel, after which the priest goes out on the beach and
796 blesses all the canoes. After he has gone, the participants in
794 African cults make their offering for the day. This is the date
782 when presents are given to the Mother of Waters (Mae d'Agua locally, but sometimes known as Janaina, Sereia, or Yansan
776 in other parts of Brazil). The presentations are made by the cult priestesses, but anyone who wants to give a present to the Mother of Waters may do so by handing the gift to the cult
[822] priestess beforehand. The presents may consist of money or of anything a woman can use, as long as it is white: combs, ribbons, powders, perfumes, soaps, flowers, and so on. Everything is wrapped together and placed in a large clay basin covered with white cloths and decked with white flowers.

The cult priestess comes out of the cult house after Mass and, accompanied by participants and onlookers, goes down to the beach and enters one of the large canoes prepared for the occasion. The cult drummers accompany her, as well as most of the female devotees (filhas de santo). Usually two presents are given, one to the young Mother of Waters, who lives near the town, and another, larger one to the old Mother of Waters, who lives at about an hour's distance from town, where the water is very deep. The canoes take off and proceed up the river, while the drums beat and the devotees sing. The Mother of Waters is called and praised, and when the canoes arrive where the younger one lives, her present is lowered into the water. If it does not sink it is a very bad sign, for it means that the present was rejected. The bundles usu-
• [787] ally sink, however, for they are bound in a heavy clay basin. At this moment the Mother of Waters is supposed to enter the body of the person who placed the gift in the water. This person, usually an older devotee, enters a trance state and must

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be held in the canoe by the others, for she tries to jump into the water. At the same time, all those present in the canoe scoop up the water and pour it over themselves, for it is at this moment quite holy. The possessed person is gradually calmed and brought back to a normal state as the canoes move up the river.

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During this time, groups of fishermen often go out in their newly blessed canoes (canoas de bordejo) to play. Because their canoes have been blessed by the priest, and because of the holy aspect of the water resulting from the presence of the Mother of the Waters, the men may enter the water without fear, so they jump in and out of the water and swim around their canoes until they are tired. This cannot be done at any other time of the year for it is not considered safe to enter deep water.

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After the second gift has been offered and accepted, the party lands and goes back to town on foot in a spirit of great joy and gaiety. The rest of the day is given over to horse racing, visiting, gaming, and dancing on the fishermen's square. People from classes A and B do not participate in these proceedings, which they consider barbarous. But most lower-class people at least watch, although only participants enter the canoes. Observers walk along the banks and watch. Cults from the rural areas make their own presentations separately, frequently on Christmas Day and in another locale.

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The next festival in the year comes after January 6, the Day of Kings, which has already been mentioned. Parties take place from this day until the beginning of Lent. Other than a Mass, there is no longer much sanctity connected to this day.

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The most important festival of the year is that of Nossa Senhora da Conceição da Praia, the patron saint of most of the fishermen, to whom their chapel is dedicated. This festival begins on January 13 and starts off each evening with a novena held in the fishermen's chapel. The priest goes each evening for the novena, and, on the three last days of the festival, each morning, to celebrate Mass in honor of Nossa Senhora da Conceição, St. Peter, and St. John. A committee is organized in the chapel to ask patrons for contributions to the festival, for candles, oils, electric light, and to pay the priest each night. Flowers are a very important part of the festival, although at this time of the year they are very expensive. Each night of the novena there is a different group of patrons, and

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[778] to do with cultism. His parents were strongly opposed to cultism and had told him that it was bad. But the next day the stone was back in his house, frightening him. He again threw it away, and again it reappeared in his house. Then he took it to the cult leader on the plantation, who told him that it was
[782] a sign that he had an obligation to fulfill toward the gods. To put an end to the matter, it was necessary to make certain appeasements in the form of food and drink. So he began to save money, and at the same time took instruction from the woman as to what to do. During this time he became genuinely interested in cultism and became the "most curious"
[428] of the woman's disciples. He studied for many years with her
[765] and did as much as he could in the ceremonies. When she died she left the house to him, as he was the most active among her followers. After he had observed the honorary period of a year after her death and had properly dispatched her saints,
[578] he moved into the house where he has now been leader for thirteen years. Because of jealousies and fights over the inheritance, many of the devotees broke away and went to other houses, taking their saints with them.

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177 Three years after he had taken over the house, he had his first experience with the Indian spirit Seven Stars, who came to him in a dream and let it be known that he wanted to enter the man and become part of the cult. For some time the man resisted, for the cult was traditionally Nagó and the former leader would have had nothing to do with Indian spirits. Seven Stars, however, threatened him with extinction if he did not comply, so in the end he gave in, and one night during a ceremony was possessed by Seven Stars. Everyone liked Seven Stars, because he was a very happy and gay spirit and danced well. After this many other devotees in the house were also possessed by this as well as by one or two other Indian spirits, neither of which, however, was considered as nice as Seven Stars.

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[796] According to dogma, there are twenty-one Indian spirits, although the informant could not name them all and neither could anyone else. All twenty-one live in an aldeia (village) in the woods. There was nothing in the African tradition to tell what preparation was necessary for these spirits, so the entire ritual became one of inventiveness and propitiousness. Nowadays young people who enter the cults are nearly always taken by an Indian spirit and are much pleased, for these spirits involve less expense and much less work. The major com-

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plaint about African deities is the amount of work involved and the great expense entailed by making the proper clothes and buying the beads and bracelets. All leaders say that no one can afford traditional spirits these days. Those who had formerly had them, of course, still do, but have also been visited by Indian spirits which they much prefer. So they carry out the more fundamental obligations toward the African spirits, such as providing food and drink, but they dress and dance for their Indian spirits. The result has been a confusion of rituals--the use of African music and incantations and the addition of new dances, costumes, and foods appropriate for the simpler tastes of the Indian spirits.

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The cult houses (terreiros) are built like other houses in the community. The active one in town is located on a street in line with all the other houses, while that on the plantation is set slightly apart from the others, because of the scattered configuration of the village. The front room, which is the largest, is usually bare except for a few long wooden benches and a small altar with pictures of the patron saints of the cult leader and of several of the cult members. This room is decorated with crepe paper streamers and paper flowers; the dances are held here. The other rooms of the house consist of a bedroom, a dining room, a kitchen, and another room known as the pegi, which houses the African altar with its plants and leaves, dishes, bottles, cups, and glasses of food and drink for the spirits, as well as the symbol of each one of them, such as a spade, a sword, or a hatchet. In this room there is also usually a trunk containing the ceremonial paraphernalia used during the festivities, such as the dress and headdress of each spirit. This is the room in which sacrificial killings (matanças) are made of the goats and chickens used during the ceremonies. In the rural house there are also pictures of Catholic saints in the pegi, another departure from the older traditional houses where such a thing would never occur.

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The cult leader lives in the cult house. In the literature on candomblé the cult leader is usually referred to as the mae, or pai, de santo, which means literally "mother (or father) of the saints." None of the cult leaders in Vila Recôncavo likes this term; they say they could not possibly be the mother or father of the divine beings. They consider themselves rather zeladores, that is, caretakers of the saints on earth. There is much the same complaint about the term filha, or filho, de

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192 santo, which means literally "daughter (or son) of the saint." They prefer to refer to a person as "having a saint" (tem santo) which indicates that he has an obligation toward one of the
• [787] saints and becomes possessed by him. In ordinary speech the word "saint" is used, but once the person has "made his saint" --that is, has gone through the preparatory rites and has learned the cries and dances of the divinity and how to care for him properly--it is said that the person has Ômolú, or Sete Estrelas (Seven Stars).

794 Because most of the women, and the few men in the cults,
787 cannot spend a year segregated in the cult house in order to
776 "make their saint," they continue for many years in the halfway condition of someone who "has a saint but has not yet made the saint." This means that the person has experienced possession, and that it has been determined by the zelador that he is under obligation to a certain saint and is in the process of "making the saint." During this period of simply "having the saint," the person has to carry out certain duties such as feeding the saint, making the proper clothes, and buying the beads and other outer symbols of the deity which are to be used during the ceremonies. This involves considerable expenditure. The clothes are always made of silk, since nothing is
[511] too good for the saint. Today, lipstick, perfume, and cheap jewelry are competing for the few extra cents the girls have, so that it takes longer and longer to get the necessary items together. During this period, the obligations of dancing and possession are less strenuous. In the case of the Indian spirits, the deity often speaks through the person after one or two possessions, and this is taken to mean that the spirit is firmly upon the person and may be considered "made." In this fashion much arduous work is avoided, as well as considerable expense. This is a major reason for the growing popularity of the Indian saints, in addition to the fact that they are gayer.

794 The drummers also like Indian saints, for, after they have
533 danced, the Indian spirits usually take up a collection which
[465] is presented to the drummers for having played so well for
[776] them. The drummers are drawn from men whose wives participate in the activities, or else they are men who are interested in the proceedings and who like to drum. They learn the drumming early in their lives, listening to it as children when they go to watch the ceremonies. On nights when the drums are playing it is impossible for anyone not to hear the impos-

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ing, exciting sounds, which continue for hours on end. Little boys pick up the rhythms quickly and soon associate each rhythm with the particular spirit who dances to it. As they grow older and show interest in it, they may be allowed to relieve one of the drummers during an interval and in this way join the others in some less important part of the ceremony, until finally the zelador feels they know enough to drum for the entire evening.

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The entire proceedings are considered too strenuous for children, as much for the boy drummers as for the girl dancers. If a small girl shows signs of possession during the ceremony she is taken away, for until she is over fourteen dancing is considered too strenuous for her. But unless her family refuses, she may be coached in all the rituals by the other dancers and the zelador. The ceremonies always draw more onlookers than performers, and outside the rural cult house a man has set up a small stand to sell refreshments. As many as can, enter the room and line the walls, while the others stand outside, looking in through the open doors and windows. Most people know the procedure in a vague way and know whom the drums are calling and who "has" which saint.

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The ceremonies are rather long, the first step in the actual performance being the calling of the saints. The evening's participants dance in a circle while the drums call the various spirits. It sometimes takes quite a while for the saint to come, and there are times when he does not come at all. One young man danced unsuccessfully for over an hour and was finally removed, exhausted, by the zelador. When someone in the circle "falls," he is quickly led out of the room and into the pegi where the zelador changes his clothing, putting on him the costume of the spirit. In the meantime the others rest or may keep on dancing, becoming possessed one after the other, depending upon the type of ceremony. After the possessed person has been dressed and has completed the necessary ritual, he is led back into the main room where he now, as the saint, dances in earnest until tired or angered by something which occurs in the room. Often the zelador gives the signal for the drums to change their rhythm, indicating the end of the dance, by which time the person is physically very tired although emotionally highly keyed up. He is led back into the pegi to complete the detailed rituals, and is then given a place to rest and to come back to normal. As a rule he soon joins the others in the front room as a spectator. By

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then the drums are calling the other saints, the circle has been formed again, and the process is repeated. This goes on frequently all night long, ending only with the dawn. The rural cult house has a general ceremony for all the saints of the house during the New Year holiday, and it often takes three or four days and nights of continuous dancing and drumming for all the participants to "fulfill their obligations." Activities cease for a while during the day while everyone rests, and then pick up again late in the afternoon.

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The general rule is that the person who "has a saint" must fulfill his obligations to that spirit at least once a year, if possible on the saint's day. Of course, the proper foods must be supplied constantly throughout the year, but at least once a year the saint must be feted, that is, called to possess the person and dance. The general term used for the ceremony is bater (to beat, referring to the drums), although several other euphemisms are used, such as, "We are going to have a party," or, "We are going to play." If the person is unable to fete the saint on the specified day, however, he must do it at the general ceremony at the end of the year. Not to comply with the rituals would be disastrous. The zelador of the house always fetes his saint on the proper day as well as at the end of the year. In both active cult houses the zeladores have more than one saint and try to fete each on the specified date. All participants keep the symbolic paraphernalia of their saints in the cult house and look after them personally if possible, but for many of them who live far from the house the zelador does this. In many cases a person who "has a saint" has a miniature pegi in his own house and also keeps there the proper foods and drinks. In some cases an older woman may even have a ceremony in her home if she can afford the requisite sacrificial animals and foods.

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Membership in the cults is not always passed down from parents to children. Many of the younger participants have come into the cults on their own and may be children of families which are unsympathetic to cult activities. When a mother belongs to a cult, her children may be indoctrinated in the rituals because of their continued attendance at the ceremonies. But unless the children feel the call themselves, no pressure is applied upon them to enter the activities, though they may always participate vicariously in the ceremonies. The majority of the population say they have nothing to do with the cults and are ignorant of the ritual. But few members of

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er of the Waters. Naturally, in such a small group, the secret is not very well kept and it is soon known who has sent a present, why, and when. Many people in this group, and some in Class A, entertain the fear that they may become themselves possessed by a deity, especially if they expose themselves to cult activities during a ceremony, and for this reason they do not attend the rituals. To a certain extent this fear is the basis for the protest many of them make against night-long drumming, although the common complaint is that they cannot sleep because of the noise. The sound of the drums at night is very impressive, and no one is unaware that nearby the supernatural is being called. It is very disturbing to those who do not understand the mechanics of the ceremonies and the meaning of the drumming and sacrifices.

Spiritualism

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Spiritualism, which does not use drums, is as disturbing as cultism to people of all classes, although because of its quieter character it is not always known when a session is taking place. Spiritualism seems to be gaining popularity in the area, although it is greatly feared by many people. It is slowly gaining adherents, however, because of the healing powers exhibited by the mediums. In most cases people are drawn to it, both in the town and in the rural area, through illness and the promise of a cure. Because of lack of aid from the doctor, or because of the expense of medical treatment, or perhaps because of the failure of the African cult to cure him, a patient may try spiritualism as a last resort. For those who are helped by it, it becomes a constant companion, and although they may have entered with fear, they soon lose it. They become staunch defenders and try to draw in their friends. The greatest successes in curing seem to follow the herbal treatments of the African cultists, but spiritualism requires no further obligations, as do the cults. It is common to hear someone say that attendance at a spiritualist seance cured him of some minor ailment and left him free of obligations, and that he did not even have to pay the medium. Spiritualism is also used to discover and counteract the evil eye and evil machinations of any enemy. In spiritualism one finds the same Indian spirits which are found in the local African cults, although no dancing is involved. There is now definite competition between the mediums and the cult leaders for adherents.

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There is one outstanding case of a Class A family which has been "helped" by spiritualism. This family had not been too well liked in the town and felt that evil was being worked against it. It was claimed that a local medium prevented harm to the father of this family through the medium's spirit. The father became convinced of the value of spiritualism and converted his wife to it. They now make no move without first consulting the spirits, and they frequently call the medium to their house in Salvador for aid. The urban upper class is no stranger to spiritualism, and even those who make no use of mediums and spiritualistic sessions seem to consider themselves possible victims of spiritualism. A decade or so ago, experiments with spiritualism, such as the moving glass, were popular. These experiments gained many adherents and left many others in a state between belief and disbelief in the possibilities of spiritualism.

Protestantism

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Protestantism has made no entry in Vila Recôncavo. This is a minor point of pride among the residents, who have heard of Protestantism but know nothing about it. In other areas of the Recôncavo there have been converts, but as yet there are no Protestant churches, chapels, or house groups in Vila Recôncavo. In other communities, traveling ministers hold services in small private houses of the adherents. Just as with the African cults, there always are many onlookers standing outside who discuss the merits of the sermon and of the Bible readings and hymn singing. Those who are sufficiently impressed sometimes join, but as yet there is considerable resistance to another organized religion.

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oxhorn, both of which are employed for protection against [824] the *mau olhado*, or "evil eye." Or they may be of a more general nature like the letters *J M J* (Jesus, Maria, José), or the *signo de Salomão* ("sign of Solomon")[35] either or both of which may be painted or carved on the door of the house or even tattooed on an individual's arm, leg, or chest; or a small pouch worn around the neck and containing either a *patuá* (presumed to protect against evil, especially the machinations of an enemy or death in battle)[36] or a small piece of garlic, "Danda root," *mil homens*, or *arruda*, a clove, or merely some object sacred to the *orixá* to whom the individual is dedicated. Similarly employed are such magical practices as the sprinkling of sea water in the four corners of the house, the emptying through the front door of a basin of water left overnight in the center of the floor, or the burning regularly at six o'clock in the evening of incense to which, occasionally, sulphur and pieces of oxhorn are added until the house is filled with magically potent smoke.

794 • 787 In the fetish cult, divination is commonly resorted to for such purposes as the identification of an unknown *orixá* who has "manifested himself" in human form, the determination of such matters as the eligibility of a prospective *ogan*, or male functionary of the cult, the cause of a troubling illness, or the proper course to pursue in some contemplated action. Divination is also employed to foretell future events, particularly the outcome of business or amorous ventures, jour-

[35] A six-pointed star at whose apex appears a cross.

[36] During the insurrection of 1835, the Malês, as we have seen, wore *patuás* consisting either of prayers or of verses from the Koran, written or printed in Arabic characters. They were presumed to protect against death in any form. For photographs of some of these see Nina Rodrigues, *Os africanos no Brasil* (São Paulo, 1932), p. 98, Figs. 1, 2, 3, and 4. [175] [669]

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neys, etc.[37] Oracles are invoked by way of such magical intermediaries as the *obí* and the *orobó*, or the *opêlê-ifá* (a chain of thin disks), or they may be obtained directly from an *orixá* who speaks during the "possession" of a *filha* or a *pae de santo* by way of the mouth of the one "possessed."[38]

Contact between the living and the dead is believed not only to be possible but to occur regularly. Hence, the prac-

[37] The serious character of a transaction of this sort puts it in a different category from certain other magical acts, common to all classes, which have the character of a game, being similar, for example, to practices attaching to our festival of Halloween. Thus, one may take a glass, "bless" it three times, put in it the white of an egg, and, holding it over a fire, again thrice "bless" it; or partially fill a basin with water and permit the tallow from a lighted candle to drip into it; or stick a knife up to the hilt in a banana tree and leave it until morning. The patterns formed on the glass, the water, and the knife, respectively, are presumed to indicate the initials of one's future spouse. A similar image is presumed to appear in the dreams of one under whose pillow has been left a freshly husked ear of corn.

[38] Other magical practices of this sort are: the placing of crushed charcoal under a rock to expedite the recovery of a lost article, the burying of the third of a rosary to stop rain; also, it is commonly believed that a hummingbird inside the house, or the singing of an *adisem-quevem*, announces the coming of guests; that the appearance of an owl, or of an *ouriço cacheiro*, foretells death; that a black butterfly is a sign of misfortune; that a katydid with dark eyes brings unpleasant news, while one with light eyes brings favorable news; that seeing the new moon for the first time between the branches of a tree or anywhere partially obscured is a sign of misfortune throughout the coming month; that the showing of money to the new moon when seen for the first time will assure no want of income for the next thirty days; that ill fortune will attend one who dwells in a house on the corner of a street, enters a house with the right foot, or opens an umbrella inside a house. Still other "signs" of misfortune are: the toad; the black cat (or the "ghost" of a cat); the *anum* perched in a tree near the house; the *jacumim;* the hummingbird, if black; the katydid, if it has a black mouth (if the katydid has a red mouth, happiness is in store for the observer). In the opinion of numerous people, mutton must not be eaten, since it is "the *lamb of God* who taketh away the sins of the world." Sheep are animals which Christians must not eat.

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tice, now not so common as formerly but still occurring, of forsaking a dwelling-place in which some member of the family has died. "Visions" are commonly reported. A *preto* related:

> Once as I was working, I suddenly noticed an old friend, together with another man, standing by me, both of them "out of the flesh." My friend spoke and asked me how I was. I told him I was "so-so." Then he said, "Did you know that Fernando was dead?" I didn't, but, sure enough, I found out the next day that he had died that very morning.

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One finds in many individuals an absolute credulity in folk tale and folk myth. Thus to many a Bahian of the lower classes the *lobishomem*, the *caipora*, the *mula de padre*, and the *biatatá* are actual entities which he himself, or someone known to him, has supposedly seen or heard.

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The *lobishomem* (werewolf), credulity in which is also common to large areas of Europe, is said at Bahia to roam about on moonlight nights, preferably on Fridays, with dogs following him. He takes the form of a man, very pallid, with an enormous shock of hair and long fingernails. Coming up behind a traveler or sneaking into the house after a child, he grasps his victim and sucks his blood. A person "very yellow" from malaria is thought to be in danger of turning into a *lobishomem*. If a family has seven sons and no daughters, the first-born is believed liable to develop into one of these creatures unless he is made co-padre with his parents at the baptism of the seventh child. The hour of such transformation is midnight sharp. A house servant remarked:

> When I was a small boy, I knew a man who turned into a *lobishomem*. There in my country, near Joazeiro [state of Bahia]. He had killed his father and his mother. He always went around with his head down, very sad and very pale. The children called him *chicobicho* and ran and hid from him. Every Friday night he turned into a

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and the next day she died. But before she died, he "arrived" and said it was he who had set fire to the *saveiro*. It was Oxóssi. Her husband also died. When one doesn't carry out his obligations [*cumpre com os seus deveres*], the *orixá* takes his life.

Once I had a party at my house for some friends. But Xangô sent me a message that I should go to the *candomblé*. I said that I was not going because I was having a party. A little while later, while I was dancing with my friends, I suddenly got a stiffness in my legs. But I didn't pay much attention to it. Then I suddenly felt an "opening of the body" [*aperto no corpo*],[13] and I didn't know anything more. When I came to, I was dancing in the *candomblé*. When the *candomblé* was over, I went running clear to the top of Boeiros do Inferno ["Funnels of Hell"] without knowing anything about what I was doing. These are two hills called by that name because they are so high. I didn't feel anything. Afterward, Xangô beat me on the hands; and my hands swelled. When he "arrived" again, he said that I should pay more attention to him, or he would beat me some more. Once he struck me. On that day I was very tired, but I went to the *candomblé* and danced anyway.

I dance when there is a big ceremony; I dance for hours at a time without getting tired. The spell seizes me, and sometimes I dance more than three days without feeling the least bit tired. When the *orixá* "arrives in my head," I spend a week or more "sleeping."[14] I don't feel anything. I don't see anything. People talk to me, but I don't know anything about what is going on.

If one drinks water, the *orixá* doesn't "arrive." For instance, one feels cold. That cold is in the body. The *orixá* wants "to arrive." Then one drinks water. He who is of the *preceito* does not drink water. And whoever drinks, breaks the *preceito*. It is prayed ten times.[15]

[13] A "trembling of the body," signifying that the *orixá* wished to enter and to "manifest himself" in human form. See chap. x.

[14] That is, moving about, but unconscious of what is happening.

[15] That is, by taking a drink of water, one can presumably prevent the deity from entering the body. One must at the same time pray ten words and tap the ground ten times. In this way, the *preceito* (i.e., the control of the deity over one) is broken.

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My *pae de santo* made an *ebó* for me last week. It is a *limpeza do corpo* ["cleansing of the body"]. I had an unclean body and dragged myself around, listless. I went to the "master" of the *candomblé* and he "opened the table" and looked to see if my body was unclean. He then asked me to bring toasted maize, a black cloth, popcorn, honey, and a candle. He passed them all over me,[58] and when he had finished, he took them and left them in a crossroads. Friday is the day for this.

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Now if a person puts a *bruxaria*[59] in your doorway, with a doll stuck through with pins, that is of the *feiticeiro* and it is different from a "cleansing of the body." My *pae de santo* does not make *feitiço*. He says that he does not care to do harm to people, because he has a soul for which he is responsible to God. But any *pae de santo* who wishes to bring harm upon someone can do so. For example, if I arrive in his *casa* and say that I want to do something to someone he asks me: "What do you want to do to her?" I say that when she comes to my door I want her to go blind. He will "make a business" and the next day she will come to my door and go blind. Or else I say that I want her to be wounded by a knife. He arranges it so that this happens.[60]

159 787• 793 778 [439] [435]

"Opening the table" is a thing done with *buzios*. The *pae de santo* puts an *orixá* on top of the table, together with his little towel.[61] He takes up the *buzios* and sees if "the way is open." My *pae de santo* "opens the table" with beads.[62] He takes the beads and puts them alongside *palha* from the *pindoba*.[63] These beads come from the Coast.[64] His set cost 1:000$000.[65]

[58] That is, in front, to side, behind, above the head, etc.

[59] Any instrument of black magic.

[60] That is, she will be attacked in a lonely place by robbers, or accidentally stabbed. The action is always mediate.

[61] The table-covering which is placed over the *orixá* in the *pegi*, or sanctuary.

[62] Other means employed: a glass of water, a set of playing cards.

[63] Fronds from a variety of the coconut palm.

[64] That is, from the West Coast of Africa.

[65] One thousand milreis, or one conto, equivalent at that time to approximately $60.

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794 776 [178]

occasionally one meets an older *Africano* who thinks of Olorun as "the creator of all the other *orixás*." Each is thought to have his home in Africa, and when one inquires of a black how the *orixás* can come so far to eat and drink the offerings set out for them, the answer is always easy, "They are summoned, and they come at once."

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Each *orixá* is presumed on occasion to "manifest himself" in human form and to speak his will. Such "manifestation" is accomplished by "arriving in the head" of an individual who has been dedicated to him. His "presence" is attested by an abnormal psychic state accompanied by violent, spasmodic muscular movements, particularly of the neck, shoulder, and back muscles. Seizure ordinarily takes place during ceremonial dances, but occasionally (quite rare today) it may occur spontaneously while the individual is alone and about his work. Subsequently, the one in whom the *orixá* has "arrived" and "manifested himself" is unaware of what has transpired.

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The name, sex, personification, fetish, insignia, sacred foods, sacred dress, sacred ornaments, sacred day, and identifying call of the principal Gêge-Nagô *orixás* at Bahia are as given in Table 15.

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Each *seita* is presided over by a priest or priestess known as the *pae de santo* or *mãe de santo* (literally, the "father" or "mother" of the *orixás*). His (or her) most important functions are to identify a "manifesting" deity, supervise the initiation of the ceremonial dancers in whom an initial "manifestation" has occurred, perform the sacred ritual designed to "fix" the *orixá* in the fetish, supervise the sacrifices, and preside at public ceremonies. He may also exercise, to some extent at least, the office of an *olhador*, or diviner, who "throws the Ifá" to determine in advance the

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some reason male members of the seita rarely experience, as do the women members, the "manifestation" of an *orixá*. Consequently, very few males ever pass through the rigorous period of training which must always follow the initial "appearance" of a deity in a given individual. Moreover, the men, being more mobile than the women, are ordinarily brought into more extensive contact with the Europeans and their descendants and consequently tend to take over more readily the ideas and sentiments of the whites. The women, on the other hand, ordinarily remain more closely identified with the customs and traditions of their African ancestors. It is probably for this reason that several of the more prominent and influential *candomblés* in Bahia now have women leaders. For the head of a *seita*, upon his approaching death, ordinarily chooses the new priest (or priestess) from among those members of the cult who are most learned in the ritual and other tradition. When asked about the occasion for So-and-so's selection, cult members always say, "Ele [*or* ela] é muito sabido" ("He is very learned in the ritual").

Other sacred functionaries include the *ogans*, or male members of the *seita*, who assist the *pae* or *mãe de santo* with the ritual, particularly in invoking the presence of the *orixás* during ceremonial dances, help initiate new *ogans*, act as intermediaries between the *seita* and the legal authorities, and contribute toward the expenses of the cult; the *achôgun*, or "second *pae*" as he is often called, who performs the sacrifices; the *jibonam*, or *pequena mãe* ("little mother"), next in authority to the *mãe de santo*, who assists the ceremonial dancers in carrying out their *preceitos*, or ritualistic obligations, and who makes the *despacho*, or food offering, to Exú at the opening of each important ceremony; the musicians, who assist at certain secret rituals and all public cere-

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794 monies, together with their leader, the *alabê;* and the very important *filhas de santo* (literally "daughters of the *orixás*"), or ceremonial dancers, who serve as the so-called *cavalos* ("horses") for the deities who "manifest themselves" in their bodies and speak through them their will.

794 This "visitation" is known as the *estado de santo* ("state of
• 787 the *orixá*") and is ordinarily induced by prolonged fasting, the pungent odors of certain sacred herbs, the monotonous and long-continued beating of the *atabaques*, the heat from a large number of human bodies densely packed together on a warm night, the fatigue attendant on long-sustained dancing, the imperative expectations of the group, and, often as a precipitating incident, when tensions have been built up to the point where they can no longer be sustained, a sudden, loud, and unexpected noise. Seizure is said to be avoidable, as we have noted, by drinking cold water.

794 On the first "visitation" of an *orixá* in the body of an individual she must submit to either of two initiatory rites. She may elect the complete initiation of *fazer santo* ("to make the *orixá*"), or the partial initiation of *dar comida a cabeça*" ("to give food to the head"). If she elects the former, as most do, she makes an initial food offering to Exú, following which a fetish is secured and "prepared" by being washed by the *pae de santo* and immersed in *azeite de dendê*, honey, or *acaça*, depending on the *orixá*, the entire ritual being accompanied by special invocations. The initiate, or *yaubô*, as she is now called, then surrenders all her garments, which, in symbol of the new life upon which she is about to enter, will never be worn again, and submits to a ritualistic bath, at dusk, in water scented with sacred herbs of a pungent odor. The *yaubô* is then received in the *pegi* by the dig-
[782] nitaries of the cult and seated in a chair never before used,

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while the *orixás* "partake" of a special sacrifice offered to them. Her hair is cut off, her head shaved,[1] and dots and circles are painted in white upon the crown, forehead, and cheeks. The initiate then takes on *obí* in her hand, the *atabaques* begin to beat an invocation to her *orixá*, and she dances the special dance sacred to him until he "arrives in her head" and she experiences once more the *estado de santo*. The *yaô* is then escorted from the *pegi* to the *camarinha*, where she remains for sixteen days before participating in her first public ceremony, whence she returns to the *camarinha* for a period of six months to a year, to be taught the various rituals of the cult, the songs, and, to some extent at least, an African language. Meanwhile, she is subject to certain food and other taboos.

To verify her acceptance by the *orixá*, a *filha* may be required to undergo without evidence of bodily harm an ordeal, such as swallowing lighted candlewicks soaked in *azeite de dendê*, thrusting her hands into boiling palm oil, chewing the leaves of the *urtiga* (Brazilian thistle), or submitting, on bended knee, to being beaten about the neck and arms with a sprig of the thorny *cansanção*.

Throughout her life the new *filha de santo*, in addition to submitting to the "manifestations" of her *orixá*, must perform on occasion certain ritualistic acts, rigorously observe certain food, drink, and sex taboos, and wear a special costume on ceremonial occasions and "days of obligation" (Fridays especially). On her death this costume, together with the other objects of cult worship belonging to her, are taken and dropped into the sea, "to be carried by the waves back to Africa."

Upon being "made," the *filha de santo* acquires a *guia*

[1] Formerly, all hairy parts of the body were shaved.

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794 ("guide") and a protector who, if she obeys the prescribed rituals and taboos, may bring her, it is thought, much fortune and happiness. "Look at me!" exclaimed a newly "made" *filha*. "My *orixá* is the greatest of all the *orixás*. He's powerful. I'm a black woman and can't read or write. But I'm living with a man *formado* in the Faculdade de Medicina. See what Oxalá did for me!"

794 796 [562] As has already been noted, the rituals and ceremonies of the cult are serious and dignified and carried on in accordance with fixed traditional forms. Among the essential elements of the Gêge-Nagô ceremonies is the rigid separation of spectators according to sex. The males always occupy the seats to the left of the drums, the females those to the right. [273] No drunkenness or obscenity is permitted. Said a member of a Nagô *seita*, "If they drink *cachaça* in a *candomblé*, you may know it is not well organized." Once at a ceremony at Gantois an intoxicated man forced his way through the crowd into the *barracão*. Immediately, the *mãe de santo* who was presiding signaled to two *ogans* who, calling out of the crowd a police official, promptly ejected the intruder.[9]

794 576 The *filhas de santo* before beginning a ceremonial dance make obeisance to the *pae* or *mãe de santo* by dropping to their knees and bowing their heads to the ground before the leader of their cult. Similar obeisance is also made to visiting *paes* or *mães de santo* or other honored personages of the fetish world and, occasionally, to the *ogans*.

794 796 787 [114] When, during the ceremonial dance an *orixá* "arrives in the head" of a *filha*, she must, after the first violent seizure

[9] Such romanticized accounts of fetish cult ceremonies as that given by Graça Aranha and uncritically quoted by Vera Kelsey (*Seven Keys to Brazil* [New York, 1940], pp. 27–28), if they have any basis in fact at all, owe it to the disintegration of formerly wholesome cultural forms now characteristic of certain *macumba* centers of Rio de Janeiro.

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has passed, dance the dance sacred to her *orixá*, after which she is assisted from the *barracão* into the *pegi*, taking due care to withdraw with her face always toward the drums. In a special room she is then dressed in the ceremonial robes sacred to her *orixá* and, with his sacred insignia, returns to the *barracão* to dance for hours the dances sacred to him.

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The sacrifices are performed according to the ritual peculiar to the occasion and include the offering of chickens, pigeons, sheep, and goats.

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In the *candomblé* world certain gestures are obligatory. Thus, when saluting a high dignitary of the cult, a *filha*, if the *orixá* to whom she is dedicated is masculine, prostrates herself, face downward at the feet of the one so honored; if her *orixá* is feminine, she lies at full length first on one side, then on the other, and, on rising, touches her head to the ground. In taking leave of an *orixá* who has "visited" the ceremony, a member of the *seita* clasps tightly the left hand of the ceremonial dancer. *Ogans* have a special handshake used only between them. Following a discussion among members of a *seita*, agreement is signified by rising, beating the palms, and shaking hands.

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Status in the *candomblé* depends not only on one's position in the hierarchy of functionaries but more particularly upon priority in being "made" or confirmed. Those whose years of service are less are known as "the younger" and must address "the older" with greater respect and, as an *ogan* remarked, "prefer him above one's self."

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The musical instruments employed include the *atabaques*, or drums; the *agôgô*, with which the priest or priestess strikes the first notes of each invocation and later accompanies the drums; the *caxixi;* the *agê* (also known as the *cabaça*, or *piano de cuia*); the *adjá;* and, occasionally, the *xaque-xaque*.

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songs are ordinarily composed of simple sentences in the minor key, and the scale, which on importation from Africa is said to have consisted of only five intervals, now has seven.

Among the invocations sung to the various *orixás* is that given by a former *ogan* of the *candomblé* of Gantois:

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Egbêji mori ô ri, okorin-kam
Orolu mori ô ri, okorin-kam
(Powerful One, I know thee as the first man)

Ôkum-kum biri-biri
Ajá lê mori ô korin-kam
(Even in the dark I can see thou art powerful)

A orêrê aiê, orixá loman,
Iá, ochê Egbêji orêrê, aiê
(In the whole world, nothing is hidden from the Great-One)"

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At the burial of a cult member the songs and musical instruments of the *candomblé* ceremonies are now seldom used as, it is said, they formerly were. But the casket is carried by *ogans*, and the *filhas*, in *bahiana* costume, accompany the procession. Since it is still believed that the *orixá* of the departed may at this time seek a new *cavalo*, no pregnant woman attends. "Possession," however, may and does occur. Thus, at the burial of an elderly Negro woman, a *filha* of Ogun from the *candomblé* of Engenho Velho, who had been "made" for thirty-three years and was widely known and respected for her knowledge of African ritual, two *filhas de santo* were "seized" as the procession wound its way up the steep ascent to Quinta dos Lazaros Cemetery, and another later as the crypt was being sealed. In each case "possession" began with light weeping which soon increased to loud sobbing, the individual meanwhile pressing her hands

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" Manoel Querino, *Costumes africanos no Brasil* (Rio, 1938), p. 108.

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forcefully to her head, one in front and one in back, as if in great pain. Knees then gave way and shoulders and back muscles began to vibrate violently. In one case, the spine stiffened and, with the exception of the shoulder muscles which continued a rapid quivering, the entire body became rigid, with arms and legs stretched out at full length. Meanwhile, the *filha* whimpered, cried, or shrieked aloud.

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To reach the *seita* of a well-known *mãe de santo*, one takes a Calçada car out of the city, past orange groves and fields of tall forage grass, to the Matadouro, where he alights and begins to climb a steep winding road lined with the *nativo* plant (said to be native to Africa) and *uricuri* and coconut palms, until, after more than a mile of trudging, he comes out onto a high ridge overlooking a green valley, where he can see, far in the distance, the houses of the city. A cool breeze blows in from the sea and tempers the heat of the tropical sun. In a grove of scattered palm trees nestle several houses, some of which are neatly whitewashed and others tinted pink, yellow, or blue.

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The *mãe de santo* is called Anninha. She is a tall regal-appearing black, whose slightest gesture is immediately obeyed by members of her *seita*. She owns considerable property and is said to be otherwise quite well to do. She boasts, proudly, "Sou filha de dois Africanos, graças a Deus" ("I am the daughter of two Africans, thank God"). Queito she learned to speak, she says, from her parents; Nagô she acquired "in the *seita*." She is illiterate, but of her learning in the ritual and belief of the African cult an *ogan* says, with pride, "She knows African things better than anyone I know in Bahia." Intelligent, quick-witted, agile in debate, she is one of the most widely respected and revered leaders of the Afro-Brazilian world.

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The dances continue unabated for hours, until the air of the *barracão* becomes very warm and permeated with the odor of perspiring bodies. Seriously, with rapt attention, the closely packed crowd looks on, eager to see and hear the numerous *orixás* as they "arrive." During a period of the most intense excitement, when tensions have been built up almost to the breaking-point, a rocket suddenly bursts with a loud report outside the *barracão*. A woman seated among the spectators who is not a *filha de santo* is immediately thrown into violent, convulsive muscular movements and bounces up and down with great force on the board seat, her head snapping back and forth in time to the now almost frenzied beat of the drums. The *pae de santo* rushes to support her in order to prevent imminent injury. Several visiting *filhas de santo* who do not want to dance in this strange place and are consequently "resisting" the imminent "arrival" of their *orixás*, call out with imploring voices, one after the other, "Dê-me agua, por amor de Deus" ("Give me water, for the love of God!"). The face of a servant girl named Joanna, a *filha* from a neighboring *seita*, is drawn, and she appears to be in pain. Afterward, she says that her *orixá*, Xangô, was beating and striking her to make her dance and that she felt more tired than if she had danced all night long. But other spectators remark, "How beautiful! I never saw Ogun dance like that before. And Oxóssi, and Yemanjá, they are wonderful, simply wonderful!"

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The ceiling of another *barracão* (at the *terreiro* called Gantois) is trimmed with paper streamers—red, white, blue, and yellow—each alternating with rows of white paper roses. The electric-light bulb suspended from the ceiling is shaded by red and white pieces of cellophane. On the walls are red and white paper shields, each bearing the words, "Louvores á

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794 girl carries in her hand the insignia of Oxun, a *leque* (fan) of brass decorated with a star.

794 All the other dancers, except one, are dressed in the
796 *bahiana* costume, with wide-flowing skirts of bright-colored
[291] cotton prints, blouses trimmed in handmade lace, and a *pano da Costa* two feet in width tied tightly around the small of the back and over the breasts. One woman about thirty-five years of age is dressed in an ordinary street costume of
[301] tailored blouse and skirt. Many of the dancers wear bracelets of copper, brass, bronze, lead, or glass beads, often on both wrists and occasionally three to four to the arm. One dancer has five strands of cowries about her neck.

794 The priestess of the *seita*, Mãe Menninha, is a large
793 black woman, forty-one years of age, who has officiated in this *seita* for twenty-four years. She proudly speaks of herself as "uma neta d'um Africano" ("the granddaughter of an African").

786 Every dance begins with the salutation of the *mãe de san-*
535 *to*, which is accomplished by striking decisively the *agôgô*.
794 Immediately the drums take up the rhythm. The *filhas* be-
796 gin to dance, the circle turning like the rim of a wheel,
[576] counterclockwise. The women have their hands clasped be-
[533] hind their backs, their shoulders are hunching backward and forward, their bodies bending at the waist from side to side. One of the Oxun initiates moves with a halting, jerking movement, then suddenly pivots a complete turn. All the dancers are singing a refrain which sounds like, "Ô-mí-á, bá-
794 tû-lê." After some twenty minutes of continuous dancing,
796 one of the *filhas* suddenly becomes "possessed," her eyes
• 787 close, her expression becomes listless, while her neck and
786 shoulder muscles work convulsively back and forth "in time to the music." Voluntary control is apparently gone,

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and she is helped around the circle by the next in line. When the music temporarily ceases, she relaxes, staggers, and appears in imminent danger of falling. Several *filhas* rush to catch and support her.

Again the *mãe de santo* strikes the *agôgô*, the leader of the drummers takes up the rhythm and sings out a refrain in which all the dancers join, beating their palms in time with the music. The tempo increases. The dancers as they pass round the circle alternately bow their heads, flex their knees, and touch the right hand to the floor, then snap erect, all in perfect time with the music. An elderly black woman emerges from a connecting-room and, shaking vigorously a *caxixi*, joins in the dance. With loud reports, rockets go off outside the *barracão*. Popcorn is then brought in and thrown over the dancers. The eyes of the initiates, who have also made part of the circle of dancers, are closed and remain closed throughout the ceremony. The shoulders of one *yaô* jerk spasmodically, her head hangs limp and must be supported by other dancers.

Again the circle forms, and the *filhas*, singing at the top of their voices, shuffle forward in a half-stumbling movement, arms flexed at elbows and flapping up and down. An *ogan* says this dance is called *opanigé*. Sometime later, a *filha*, about forty-five years of age, suddenly sprawls stiff-legged on her hands and the tips of her toes, rapidly touches her forehead to the ground in front of the drums and shouts, "Hay-ee-ee," then leaps erect, jerks herself forward spasmodically, then repeats the performance. A girl joins the circle, wearing a pink and gold turban and carrying in her right hand a brass dagger eighteen inches long. Closing her eyes, she begins a wild dance, thrashing about with the dagger to right and to left. The tempo of the

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drums is accelerating. Another *filha*, a large but agile Negro woman, strikes out at the girl with her bare hands, and the two dance about, fighting a mock fight, while the beat of the drums becomes even more rapid and tumultuous until, just as the dancers close in upon one another where, it seems, harm might result, other *filhas* swing quickly in, catch each woman around the waist, and draw them apart, while the music slackens its tempo.

All the *filhas* begin to dance again, their arms swinging from side to side, the index finger of the right hand held closely pressing against the thumb of the left. The dancing is very animated. Suddenly, one of the *filhas*, her shoulders heaving violently back and forth, begins to sink upon her knees and, gradually lowering her heaving shoulders to the floor, turns over on her back, all the while keeping the index finger of her right hand firmly in contact with the thumb of her left. She then slowly rises, gets to her feet, and again joins the other *filhas*. An *ogan* says this dance is known as *ccú*.

The dances continue, rockets burst outside, confetti and flower petals are thrown over the initiates, and, at the insistent invocations of the drums and the spirited singing of the *filhas*, many *orixás* "arrive" and "take possession" of their human intermediaries.

The primary social function which the *candomblé* appears to serve is that of reinforcing, by way of the collective experiences of ritual and ceremony, those attitudes and sentiments which distinguish the *Africanos* and their descendants from the European population and from the major portion of the mixed-bloods. By promoting a measure of solidarity and group consciousness, it tends to slow up the process of acculturation. At the same time cult experiences